

American Renaissance

There is not a truth existing which I fear or would wish unknown to the whole world.

— Thomas Jefferson

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A White Teacher Speaks Out

What is it like to teach black students?

by Christopher Jackson

I recall a bad joke that explains, in crude terms, the relationship between blacks and whites in America today: “What do you call a white man surrounded by 20 blacks?”

“Coach.”

“What do you call a white man surrounded by 1,000 blacks?”

“Warden.”

I might add another line to this joke: “What do you call a white man surrounded by 30 blacks?”

“Teacher.”

Until recently I taught at a predominantly black high school in a southeastern state. I took the job because I wasn’t knowledgeable about race at the time, and black schools aren’t picky. The school offered me a job and suddenly I was in darkest Africa. Except, I wasn’t in Africa; I was in America.

Blacks outnumbered whites about five to one at this school and there were hardly any Hispanics. Some of my classes were all-black, or nearly so, because the gifted and advanced classes siphoned off most of the white students and I taught regular classes. There were some black teachers but the majority were white.

Most of the blacks I taught were from the area. They did not tend to travel very much, and I am sure there are regional differences in the ways in which blacks speak and act. However, I suspect my experiences were generally typical, certainly for Southern blacks.

The mainstream press gives a hint of what conditions are like in black schools, but only a hint. Expressions journalists use like “chaotic” or “poor learning environment” or “lack of discipline” do not capture what really happens. There

is nothing like the day-to-day experience of teaching black children and that is what I will try to convey.

Noise

Most whites simply do not know what black people are like in large numbers,

white women were particularly inept at trying. I sat in on one woman’s class as she begged the children to pipe down. They just yelled louder so their voices would carry over hers.

Many of my black students would repeat themselves over and over again—just louder. It was as if they suffered



Not quite the way it really is.

and the first encounter can be a shock. One of the most immediately striking things about my students was that they were loud. They had little conception of ordinary white decorum. It was not unusual for five blacks to be screaming at

Blacks are loud. It was not unusual for five students to be screaming at me at once.

me at once. Instead of calming down and waiting for a lull in the din to make their point—something that occurs to even the dimmest white students—blacks just tried to yell over each other.

It did no good to try to quiet them, and

from Tourette syndrome. They seemed to have no conception of waiting for an appropriate time to say something. They would get ideas in their heads and simply had to shout them out. I might be leading a discussion on government and suddenly be interrupted: “We gotta get more Democrats! Clinton, she good!” The student may seem content with that outburst but two minutes later, he would suddenly start yelling again: “Clinton good!”

Anyone who is around young blacks will get a constant diet of rap music. Blacks often make up their own jingles, and it was not uncommon for 15 black boys to swagger into a classroom, bouncing their shoulders and jiving back

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Letters from Readers

Sir — Thank you for publishing my article on the British National Party in your previous issue. However, I wish to clarify my reference on page 6 to the “enemy within.” I meant to explain that the difference this time is that we are not under assault from foreign attackers and that the enemy is within our own country, in the shape of our own political establishment. In the words of Leo McKinstry, a journalist who is a former parliamentary aide to the deputy leader of the Labour Party, Harriet Harman, “we are led by a bunch of traitors filled with loathing for their nation.”

Tim Rait, British National Party

Sir — After reading Tim Rait’s article in the June issue (“A Breakthrough for the BNP?”), I began reading British newspapers online to follow the campaign. The press coverage of the BNP has been appalling: “fascism” this and “racism” that. The tabloid papers, the *Mirror* and the *Daily Mail* are the worst, but the mainstream papers such as the *Guardian* and *Independent* are almost as bad. Unlike in the US, British newspapers don’t pretend to be ideologically neutral, but their coverage of the BNP bordered on the hysterical. I wonder if the press is actually doing the BNP a favor by portraying it as a party of lunatic Nazis. It is so easy to discover that this is wrong and biased that I would think many voters would be driven to learn more about the party.

Emma Hughes, Savannah, Ga.

Sir — “Whitewashing Jack Johnson” in the June issue triggered a youthful

memory. I actually saw the movie “The Great White Hope,” starring James Earl Jones, when it first came out, and Mr. Sheffield is right about the sanitizing. As I remember, the film depicts the black boxer as a heroic figure victimized by evil racists because he dared to challenge white supremacy in the ring and the bedroom. His white love interest was played by lefty actress Jane Alexander, and although I held liberal views on race typical of college students at the time (the early seventies), I recall their love scenes made me squirm uncomfortably. If I knew that the story was based on a real person, I had forgotten it. The fictional boxer portrayed in the film is nothing at all like the real one described by Mr. Sheffield. I am embarrassed to admit I fell for the Hollywood propaganda of the time.

Chuck Quinn, Eugene, Ore.

Sir — I enjoyed—if that is the correct word—your article about Jack Johnson. As you correctly noted, women were a constant preoccupation for him, but you failed to note the very real attractions he appeared to have for them, black and white. He was no low-g Negro pugilist. Not many whites could have written this:

“There have been countless women in my life. They have participated in my triumphs and suffered with me in my moments of disappointment. They have inspired me to attainment and they have balked me; they have caused me joy and they have heaped misery upon me; they have been faithful to the utmost and they have been faithless; they have praised and loved me and they have hated and denounced me. Always, a woman has swayed me—sometimes

many have demanded my attention at the same moment.”

His first known affairs were with black women but he claimed that they had turned on him. In his 1927 autobiography he wrote that these bad experiences “led me to forswear colored women and to determine that my lot henceforth would be cast only with white women.” In fact, he never gave up black women.

Your article mentioned Johnson’s marriage to Etta Duryea whom you described as a “New York socialite.” She was certainly that. She was glamorous, wealthy, dressed elegantly, played the piano, and sang. When Johnson met her at the Vanderbilt Cup car race, she was 28 years old and had been separated from her husband for two years. Many fashionable young New Yorkers were chasing her but she took up with Johnson. She certainly would not have taken up with a lout.

Although Johnson was as unfaithful to Etta as to any other woman, he was, himself, fiercely jealous. He was convinced Etta was sleeping with her French chauffeur and hired a private investigator to find out. On Christmas Day, 1910, he got into an argument with her about it and beat her so badly she had to be hospitalized—and this was before they were even married. Somehow, she took him back, and they were wed less than a month later. As you note in your article, Etta shot herself not long after. She suffered from depression, and it took a stouter constitution than hers to be married to Jack Johnson.

Johnson’s next openly acknowledged girlfriend was an 18-year-old white prostitute named Lucille Cameron. Her mother disapproved. “Jack Johnson has hypnotic powers,” she said, “and he has exercised them on my little girl. I would rather see my daughter spend the rest of her life in an insane asylum than see her the plaything of a nigger.” They married soon after but she later filed for divorce, charging Johnson with infidelity.

His next wife, Irene Pineau, divorced her white husband in order to marry him. He must still have been charming at age 46. She stuck with him to the end, and when a reporter asked him what she loved about Johnson, she said “I loved him because of his courage.”

Like it or not, Johnson must have been a remarkable man.

Sarah Wentworth, Richmond, Va.



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and forth, rapping 15 different sets of words in the same harsh, rasping dialect. The words were almost invariably a childish form of boasting: "Who got dem shine rim, who got dem shine shoe, who got dem shine grill (gold and silver dental caps)?" The amateur rapper usually ends with a claim—in the crudest terms imaginable—that all womankind is sexually devoted to him. For whatever reason, my students would often groan instead of saying a particular word, as in,

ATL tat it up.

New York tat it up.

Tat tat tat it up.

Rap is one of the most degenerate things to have come out of our country, and it is tragic that it has infected whites to the extent it has.

Black women love to dance—in a way white people might call gyrating. They dance in the hall, in the classroom, on the chairs, next to the chairs, under the chairs, everywhere. Once I took a call on my cell phone and had to step



These are their heroes.

"She suck dat aaahhhh (think of a long grinding groan), she f**k dat aaaahhhh, she lick dat aaaahhhh."

Many rap lyrics are crude but some are simply incomprehensible. Not so long ago, there was a popular rap called "Tat it up." I heard the words from hundreds of black mouths for weeks. Some of the lyrics are:

Tat tat tat it up.

outside of class. I was away about two minutes but when I got back the black girls had lined up at the front of the classroom and were convulsing to the delight of the boys.

Many black people, especially black women, are enormously fat. Some are so fat I had to arrange special seating to accommodate their bulk. I am not saying there are no fat white students—there

are—but it is a matter of numbers and attitudes. Many black girls simply do not care that they are fat. There are plenty of white anorexics, but I have never met or heard of a black anorexic.

"Black women be big Mr. Jackson," my students would explain.

"Is it okay in the black community to be a little overweight?" I ask.

Two obese black girls in front of my desk begin to dance, "You know dem boys lak juicy fruit, Mr. Jackson." "Juicy" is a colorful black expression for the buttocks.

Blacks are the most directly critical people I have ever met: "Dat shirt stupid. Yo' kid a bastard. Yo' lips big." Unlike whites, who tread gingerly around the subject of race, they can be brutally to the point. Once I needed to send a student to the office to deliver a message. I asked for volunteers, and suddenly you would think my classroom was a bastion of civic engagement. Thirty dark hands shot into the air. My students loved to leave the classroom and slack off, even if just for a few minutes, away from the eye of white authority. I picked a light-skinned boy to deliver the message. One very black student was indignant: "You pick da half-breed." And immediately other blacks take up the cry, and half a dozen mouths are screaming, "He half-breed."

For decades, the country has been lamenting the poor academic performance of blacks and there is much to lament. There is no question, however, that many blacks come to school with a serious handicap that is not their fault. At home they have learned a dialect that is almost a different language. Blacks not only mispronounce words; their grammar is often wrong. When a black wants to ask, "Where is the bathroom?" he may actually say "Whar da badroom be?" Grammatically, this is the equivalent of "Where the bathroom is?" And this is the way they speak in high school. Students write the way they speak, so this is the language that shows up in written assignments.

It is true that some whites face a similar handicap. They speak with what I would call a "country" accent that is hard to reproduce but results in sentences such as "I'm gonna gemme a Coke." Some of these country whites had to learn correct pronunciation and usage. The difference is that most whites overcome this handicap and learn to speak correctly; many blacks do not.

Most of the blacks I taught simply had no interest in academic subjects. I taught history, and students would often say they didn't want to do an assignment or they didn't like history because it was all about white people. Of course, this was "diversity" history, in which every cowboy's black cook got a special page



on how he contributed to winning the West, but black children still found it inadequate. So I would throw up my hands and assign them a project on a real, historical black person. My favorite was Marcus Garvey. They had never heard of him, and I would tell them to research him, but they never did. They didn't care and they didn't want to do any work.

Anyone who teaches blacks soon learns that they have a completely different view of government from whites. Once I decided to fill 25 minutes by having students write about one thing the government should do to improve America. I gave this question to three classes totalling about 100 students, approximately 80 of whom were black. My few white students came back with generally "conservative" ideas. "We need to cut off people who don't work," was the most common suggestion. Nearly every black gave a variation on the theme of "We need more government services."

My students had only the vaguest notion of who pays for government services. For them, it was like a magical piggy bank that never goes empty. One black girl was exhorting the class on the need for more social services and I kept trying to explain that people, real live people, are taxed for the money to pay for those services. "Yeah, it come from whites," she finally said. "They stingy anyway."

"Many black people make over \$50,000 dollars a year and you would also be taking away from your own people," I said.

She had an answer to that: "Dey

half breed." The class agreed. I let the subject drop.

Many black girls are perfectly happy to be welfare queens. On career day, one girl explained to the class that she was going to have lots of children and get fat checks from the government. No one in the class seemed to have any objection to this career choice.

Surprising attitudes can come out in class discussion. We were talking about the crimes committed in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, and I brought up the rape of a young girl in the bathroom of the Superdome. A majority of my students believed this was a horrible crime but a few took it lightly. One black boy spoke up without raising his hand: "Dat no big deal. They thought they is gonna die so they figured they have some fun. Dey jus' wanna have a fun time; you know what I'm sayin'?" A few black heads nodded in agreement.

My department head once asked all the teachers to get a response from all students to the following question: "Do you think it is okay to break the law if it will benefit you greatly?" By then, I had been teaching for a while and was not surprised by answers that left a young, liberal, white woman colleague aghast. "Yeah" was the favorite answer. As one student explained, "Get dat green."

There is a level of conformity among blacks that whites would find hard to believe. They like one kind of music: rap. They will vote for one political party: Democrat. They dance one way, speak one way, are loud the same way, and fail their exams in the same way. Of course, there are exceptions but they are rare.

Whites are different. Some like country music, others heavy metal, some prefer pop, and still others, God forbid, enjoy rap music. They have different associations, groups, almost ideologies. There are jocks, nerds, preppies, and hunters. Blacks are all—well—black, and they are quick to let other blacks know when they deviate from the norm.

One might object that there are important group differences among blacks that a white man simply cannot detect. I have done my best to find them, but so far as I can tell, they dress the same, talk the same, think the same. Certainly, they

form rival groups, but the groups are not different in any discernible way. There simply are no groups of blacks that are as distinctly different from each other as white "nerds," "hunters," or "Goths," for example.

How the world looks to blacks

One point on which all blacks agree is that everything is "racis'." This is one message of liberalism they have absorbed completely. Did you do your homework? "Na, homework racis'." Why did you get an F on the test? "Test racis'."

I was trying to teach a unit on British philosophers and the first thing the students noticed about Bentham, Hobbes, and Locke was "Dey all white! Where da black philosopher a'?" I tried to explain there were no blacks in eighteenth-century Britain. You can probably guess what they said to that: "Dat racis'!"

One student accused me of deliberately failing him on a test because I didn't like black people.

"Do you think I really hate black people?"

"Yeah."

"Have I done anything to make you feel this way? How do you know?"

"You just do."

"Why do you say that?"

He just smirked, looked out the win-



After Katrina, at the Superdome.

dow, and sucked air through his teeth. Perhaps this was a regional thing, but the blacks often sucked air through their teeth as a wordless expression of disdain or hostility.

My students were sometimes unable to see the world except through the lens of their own blackness. I had a class that was host to a German exchange student. One day he put on a PowerPoint presentation with famous German landmarks as well as his school and family.

From time to time during the presentation, blacks would scream, "Where da black folk?!" The exasperated German tried several times to explain that there were no black people where he lived in Germany. The students did not believe him. I told them Germany is in Europe, where white people are from, and Africa is where black people are from. They insisted that the German student was racist, and deliberately refused to associate with blacks.

Blacks are keenly interested in their own racial characteristics. I have learned, for example, that some blacks have "good hair." Good hair is black parlance for black-white hybrid hair. Apparently, it is less kinky, easier to style, and considered more attractive.

Blacks are also proud of light skin. Imagine two black students shouting insults across the room. One is dark but slim; the other light and obese. The dark one begins the exchange: "You fat, Ridario!"

Ridario smiles, doesn't deign to look at his detractor, shakes his head like a wobbling top, and says, "You wish you light skinned."

They could go on like this, repeating the same insults over and over.

My black students had nothing but contempt for Hispanics. Whites were "racis'," of course, but they thought of us at least as Americans. Not the Mexicans.

My black students had nothing but contempt for Hispanic immigrants. They would vent their feelings so crudely that our department strongly advised us never to talk about immigration in class in case the principal or some outsider might overhear.

Whites were "racis'," of course, but they thought of us at least as Americans. Not the Mexicans. Blacks have a certain, not necessarily hostile understanding of white people. They know how whites act, and it is clear they believe whites are smart and are good at organizing things. At the same time, they probably suspect whites are just putting on an act when they talk about equality, as if it is all a sham that makes it easier for whites to control blacks. Blacks want a bigger piece of the American pie. I'm

convinced that if it were up to them they would give whites a considerably smaller piece than whites get now, but they would give us something. They wouldn't give Mexicans anything.

What about black boys and white girls? No one is supposed to notice this or talk about it but it is glaringly obvious: Black boys are obsessed with white girls. White parents would do well to keep their daughters well away from black schools. I've witnessed the following drama countless times. A black boy saunters up to a white girl. The cocky black dances around her, not really in a menacing way. It's more a shuffle than a threat. As he bobs and shuffles he asks, "When you gonna go wit' me?"

There are two kinds of reply. The more confident white girl gets annoyed, looks away from the black and shouts, "I don't wanna go out with you!" The more demure girl will look at her feet and mumble a polite excuse but ultimately say no. There is only one response from the black boy: "You racis'." Many girls—all too many—actually feel guilty because they do not want to date blacks. Most white girls at my school stayed away from blacks, but a few, particularly the ones who were addicted to drugs, fell in with them.

There is something else that is striking about blacks. They seem to have no sense of romance, of falling in love. What brings men and women together is sex, pure and simple, and there is a crude openness about this. There are many degenerate whites, of course, but some of my white students were capable of real devotion and tenderness, emotions that seemed absent from blacks—especially the boys.

Black schools are violent and the few whites who are too poor to escape are caught in the storm. The violence is astonishing, not so much that it happens, but the atmosphere in which it happens. Blacks can be smiling, seemingly perfectly content with what they are doing, having a good time, and then, suddenly start fighting. It's uncanny. Not long ago, I was walking through the halls and a group of black boys were walking in front of me. All of a sudden they started fighting with another group in the hallway.

Blacks are extraordinarily quick to take offense. Once I accidentally scuffed a black boy's white sneaker with my shoe. He immediately rubbed his body up against mine and threatened to attack me. I stepped outside the class and had



On-campus arrest.

a security guard escort the student to the office. It was unusual for students to threaten teachers physically this way, but among themselves, they were quick to fight for similar reasons.

The real victims are the unfortunate whites caught in this. They are always in danger and their educations suffer. White weaklings are particularly susceptible, but mostly to petty violence. They may be slapped or get a couple of kicks when they are trying to open a bottom locker. Typically, blacks save the hard, serious violence for each other.

There was a lot of promiscuous sex among my students and this led to violence. Black girls were constantly fighting over black boys. It was not uncommon to see two girls literally ripping each other's hair out with a police officer in the middle trying to break up the fight. The black boy they were fighting over would be standing by with a smile, enjoying the show he had created. For reasons I cannot explain, boys seldom fought over girls.

Pregnancy was common among the blacks, though many black girls were so fat I could not tell the difference. I don't know how many girls got abortions, but when they had the baby they usually stayed in school and had their own parents look after the child. The school did not offer daycare.

Aside from the police officers constantly on patrol, a sure sign that you

are in a black school is the coke cage: the chain-link fence that many majority-black schools use to protect vending machines. The cage surrounds the machine and even covers its top. Delivery employees have to unlock a gate on the

wanted drugs. An addicted girl—black or white—became the plaything of anyone who could get her drugs.

One of my students was a notorious drug dealer. Everyone knew it. He was 19 years old and in eleventh grade. Once

money to move them along, the school looks good, and the teachers look good. Many of these children should have been failed, but the system would crack under their weight if they were all held back.

How did my experiences make me feel about blacks? Ultimately, I lost sympathy for them. In so many ways they seem to make their own beds. There they were in an integrationist's fantasy—in the same classroom with white students, eating the same lunch, using the same bathrooms, listening to the same teachers—and yet the blacks fail while the whites pass.

One tragic outcome among whites who have been teaching for too long is that it can engender something close to hatred. One teacher I knew gave up fast food—not for health reasons but because where he lived most fast-food workers were black. He had enough of blacks on the job. This was an extreme example, but years of frustration can take their toll. Many of my white colleagues with any experience were well on their way to that state of mind.

There is an unutterable secret among teachers: Almost all realize that blacks do not respond to traditional white instruction. Does that put the lie to environmentalism? Not at all. It is what brings about endless, pointless innovation that is supposed to bring blacks up to the white level.



front of the cage to service the machines. Companies would prefer not to build cages around vending machines. They are expensive, ugly, and a bother, but black students smashed the machines so many times it was cheaper to build a cage than repair the damage. Rumor had it that before the cages went up blacks would turn the machines upside down in the hope that the money would fall out.

Security guards are everywhere in black schools—we had one on every hall. They also sat in on unruly classes and escorted students to the office. They were unarmed, but worked closely with the three city police officers who were constantly on duty.

Rural black schools have to have security too but they are usually safer. One reason is that the absolute numbers are smaller. A mostly-black school of 300 students is safer than a mostly-black school of 2,000. Also, students in rural areas—both black and white—tend to have grown up together and know each other, at least by sight.

There was a lot of drug-dealing at my school. This was a good way to make a fair amount of money but it also gave boys power over girls who

he got a score of three out of 100 on a test. He had been locked up four times since he was 13, and there he was sitting next to little, white Caroline.

One day, I asked him, “Why do you come to school?”

He wouldn’t answer. He just looked out the window, smiled, and sucked air through his teeth. His friend Yidarius ventured an explanation: “He get dat green and get dem females.”

“What is the green?” I asked. “Money or dope?”

“Both,” said Yidarius with a smile.

A very fat black interrupted from across the room: “We get dat lunch,” Mr. Jackson. “We gotta get dat lunch and brickfuss.” He means the free breakfast and lunch poor students get every day.

“Nigga, we know’d you be lovin’ brickfuss!” shouts another student.

Some readers may believe that I have drawn a cruel caricature of black students. After all, according to official figures some 85 percent of them graduate. It would be instructive to know how many of those scraped by with barely a C- record. They go from grade to grade and they finally get their diplomas because there is so much pressure on teachers to push them through. It saves



Crack cocaine

The solution is more diversity—or put more generally, the solution is *change*. Change is an almost holy word in education, and you can fail a million times as long as you keep changing. That is why liberals keep revamping the curriculum and the way it is taught. For example, teachers are told that blacks need hands-on instruction and more group work.

Teachers are told that blacks are more vocal and do not learn through reading and lectures. The implication is that they have certain traits that lend themselves to a different kind of teaching.

Whites have learned a certain way for centuries but it just doesn't work with blacks. Of course, this implies racial differences but if pressed, most liberal teachers would say different racial learning styles come from some indefinable cultural characteristic unique to blacks. Therefore, schools must change, America must change. But into what? How do you turn quantum physics into hands-on instruction or group work? No one knows, but we must keep changing until we find something that works.

Public school has certainly changed since anyone reading this was a student. I have a friend who teaches elementary school, and she tells me that every week the students get a new diversity lesson, shipped in fresh from some bureaucrat's office in Washington or the state capital. She showed me the materials for one week: a large poster, about the size of a forty-two inch flat-screen television. It shows an utterly diverse group—I mean diverse: handicapped, Muslim, Jewish, effeminate, poor, rich, brown, slightly brown, yellow, etc.—sitting at a table, smiling gaily, accomplishing some undefined task. The poster comes with a sheet of questions the teacher is supposed to ask. One might be: "These kids sure look different, but they look happy. Can you tell me which one in the picture is an American?"

Some eight-year-old, mired in ignorance, will point to a white child like himself. "That one."

The teacher reads from the answer, conveniently printed along with the question. "No, Billy, *all* these children are Americans. They are just as American as you."

The children get a snack, and the poster goes up on the wall until another one comes a week later. This is what happens at predominately white, middle-class, elementary schools everywhere.

Elementary school teachers love *All of the Colors of the Race*, by award-winning children's poet Arnold Adoff. These are some of the lines they read to the children: "Mama is chocolate ... Daddy is vanilla ... Me (sic) is better ... It is a new color. It is a new flavor. For

love. Sometimes blackness seems too black for me, and whiteness is too sickly pale; and I wish every one were golden. Remember: long ago before people moved and migrated, and mixed and matched ... there was one people: one color, one race. The colors are flowing from what was before me to what will be after. All the colors."

Teaching as a career

It may come as a surprise after what I have written, but my experiences have given me a deep appreciation for teaching as a career. It offers a stable, middle-class life but comes with the capacity to make real differences in the lives of children. In our modern, atomized world children often have very little communication with adults—especially, or even, with their parents—so there is potential for a real transaction between pupil and teacher, disciple and master.



A rewarding relationship can grow up between an exceptional, interested student and his teacher. I have stayed in my classroom with a group of students discussing ideas and playing chess until the janitor kicked us out. I was the old gentleman, imparting my history, culture, personal loves and triumphs, defeats and failures to young kinsman. Sometimes I fancied myself Tyrtæus, the Spartan poet, who counseled the youth to honor and loyalty. I never had this kind of intimacy with a black student, and I know of no other white teacher who did.

Teaching can be fun. For a certain kind of person it is exhilarating to map out battles on chalkboards, and teach heroism. It is rewarding to challenge liberal prejudices, to leave my mark on these children, but what I aimed for with my white students I could never achieve with the blacks.

There is a kind of child whose look can melt your heart: some working-class

castaway, in and out of foster homes, often abused, who is nevertheless almost an angel. Your heart melts for these children, this refuse of the modern world. Many white students possess a certain innocence; their cheeks still blush.

Try as I might, I could not get the blacks to care one bit about Beethoven or Sherman's march to the sea, or Tyrtæus, or Oswald Spengler, or even liberals like John Rawls, or their own history. They cared about nothing I tried to teach them. When this goes on year after year it chokes the soul out of a teacher, destroys his pathos, and sends him guiltily searching for *The Bell Curve* on the Internet.

Blacks break down the intimacy that can be achieved in the classroom, and leave you convinced that that intimacy is really a form of kinship. Without intending to, they destroy what is most beautiful—whether it be your belief in human equality, your daughter's innocence, or even the state of the hallway.

Just last year I read on the bathroom stall the words "F**k Whitey." Not two feet away, on the same stall, was a small swastika. The writing on that wall somehow symbolized the futility of integration. No child should be have to try to learn in such conditions. It was not racists who created those conditions and it wasn't poverty either; it was ignorant, white liberals.

It reminds me of Nietzsche: "I call an animal, a species, an individual corrupt, when it loses its instincts, when it *prefers* what is injurious to it."

One often hears from egalitarians that it doesn't matter what color predominates in a future America so long as we preserve our values, since we are a "proposition nation." Even if we were prepared to hand over our country to aliens who were going to "preserve our values," it simply cannot be done with blacks.

The National Council for the Social Studies, the leading authority on social science education in the United States, urges teachers to inculcate such values as equality of opportunity, individual property rights, and a democratic form of government. Even if teachers could inculcate this milquetoast ideology into whites, liberalism is doomed because so many non-whites are not receptive to education of any kind beyond the merest basics. Many of my students were

functionally illiterate. It is impossible to get them to care about such abstractions as property rights or democratic citizenship. They do not see much further than the fact that you live in a big house and “we in da pro-jek.” Of course, there are a few loutish whites who will never think past their next meal and a few sensitive blacks for whom anything is possible, but no society takes on the characteristics of its exceptions.

Once I asked my students, “What do you think of the Constitution?”

“It white,” one slouching black rang out. The class began to laugh. And I caught myself laughing along with them, laughing while Pompeii’s volcano simmers, while the barbarians swell around the Palatine, while the country I love, and the job I love, and the community I love become dimmer by the day.

I read a book by an expatriate Rhodesian who visited Zimbabwe not too many years ago. Traveling with a companion, she stopped at a store along the highway. A black man materialized next to her car window. “Job, boss, (I) work good, boss,” he pleaded. “You give job.”

“What happened to your old job?” the expatriate white asked.

The black man replied in the straightforward manner of his race: “We drove out the whites. No more jobs. You give job.”

At some level, my students understand the same thing. One day I asked

the bored, black faces staring back at me. “What would happen if all the white people in America disappeared tomorrow?”

“We screwed,” a young, pitch-black boy screamed back. The rest of the blacks laughed.

I have had children tell me to my face as they struggled with an assignment. “I cain’t do dis,” Mr. Jackson. “I black.”

The point is that human beings are not always rational. It is in the black man’s interest to have whites in Zimbabwe but he drives them out and starves. Most whites do not think black Americans could ever do anything so irrational. They see blacks on television smiling, fighting evil whites, embodying white values. But the real black is not on television, and you pull your purse closer when you see him, and you lock the car doors when he swaggers by with his pants hanging down almost to his knees.

For those of you with children, better a smaller house in a white district than a fancy one near a black school. Much better an older car than your most precious jewels cast into a school where they will be a minority.

I have been in parent-teacher conferences that broke my heart: the child pleading with his parents to take him out of school; the parents convinced their child’s fears are groundless. If you love your child, show her you care—not by giving her fancy vacations or a

car, but making her innocent years safe and happy. Give her the gift of a white school.



Zimbabweans leaving their own country.

Of course, even the whitest schools are riddled with liberalism. There is only one way to educate your children in a way that does not poison their minds. If at all possible, home school your children. Educate them yourself. **Q**

Mr. Jackson now teaches at a majority-white school. This is his first article for American Renaissance.

The White Nation of Africa

Hermann Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People*, University Press of Virginia, 2003, 698 pp., \$39.50.

A portrait of a tragic people.

by F. Roger Devlin

Ten years in the making and drawing upon a bibliography of nearly a thousand sources, this epic history of the African continent’s sole white nation is not merely monumental, it is unavoidable; no other history of the Afrikaners (as opposed to general histories of South Africa) is available in English. The author is a professor of history at Stellenbosch University and already had a dozen books to his credit when this three-pound tome appeared.

His American publisher is at pains to note that Prof. Giliomee was “one of the earliest and staunchest Afrikaner opponents of apartheid,” and his failure to consider racial differences requires the reader to supply his own interpretation of some of the events described. It is nevertheless a comprehensive treatment of a remarkable people.

The Dutch East India Company sponsored settlement of the Cape of Good Hope in 1652 with the idea of setting up a small and intensively cultivated colony whose sole purpose was to provision Dutch ships en route to and from Java. The seemingly inexhaustible land round about exerted too great a temptation, however, and within a few years settlers

were farming and herding extensively in the surrounding countryside. With land plentiful and labor scarce, the company made the fateful decision to import slaves from the Dutch East Indies. Some writers (e.g., Arthur Kemp [AR, July 2004, Letters to the Editor]) believe white reliance on non-white labor was the fatal mistake that doomed South Africa from the start. Needless to say, Prof. Giliomee does not discuss that theory; instead, he emphasizes the hierarchical nature of the society that emerged and the chronic fear of *gelykstelling*—social leveling—that characterized the Afrikaners ever afterward.

Within a generation, whites were occupying land beyond the first moun-

tain range and were effectively beyond company control. They quickly broke most of their attachments to Europe—with the important exception of the Reformed Calvinist faith—and began thinking of Africa as their only home. Settlers typically had East Indian slaves who spoke broken Dutch look after their children. As a result, later generations of whites inherited a simplified Dutch, somewhat analogous to Pidgin English (where “me go” replaces “I am going,” for example). This formed the basis of Afrikaans, an important badge of social identity in years to come.

The new nation was strengthened by the immigration of Germans and French Protestants: 20th century DNA studies revealed that not more than 40 percent of Afrikaner ancestry is Dutch. Meeting little resistance from the primitive native pastoralists they called Hottentots (now more often known as Khoi or KhoiKhoi), the nascent Afrikaner nation quickly spread eastwards along the coast for some 400 miles. In the late 1700s, in the “Zuurveld” region between Algoa Bay and the Fish River, they encountered the tougher Xhosas, racially distinct from the Hottentots. For several decades, what Prof. Giliomee calls “the Eastern frontier cauldron” was an African counterpart to America’s Wild West.

In 1795 the British took control of the Cape and tried to impose their law and language on the Afrikaners, whom they regarded as cultural and moral inferiors. The British abolished slavery in 1834, and the Afrikaner frontiersmen feared complete *gelykstelling* might be in the offing.

So deep was their distrust of the British administration that in the 1830s several groups, without any central leadership, took the radical step of moving hundreds of miles into the interior in a migration known as the Great Trek (see “The Great Trek,” AR, June 2004). They founded two new republics: the Orange Free State and the Republic of South Africa, later known as the Transvaal.

For a time, Britain recognized the independence of the Boer Republics, but when gold was discovered near Johannesburg, the British found pre-

texts for muscling in. The climax of this new British-Afrikaner conflict was the Boer War of 1899-1902. The Brit-



The Dutch settle the Cape in 1652.

ish captured the Boer capitals by the spring of 1900 but a group known as *bittereinders* (“bitter-enders”) kept up a guerrilla campaign against the invaders for two more years. By May 1902, attrition had reduced them to fewer than 20,000, while the British had increased their forces to half a million. By the end of the war, 4,177 Boer women and 22,074 Boer children had died in British concentration camps. This history of irrational defiance in the face of overwhelming defeat—something American Southerners should easily recognize—is an important element of Afrikaner folk memory to this day.

Even this brief summary may give the reader some idea of what Boer War hero Jan Smuts meant when he said, “What

“What young nation can boast a more romantic history, one of more far-reaching human interest? Color, incident, tragedy and comedy, defeat and victory, joy and sorrow.”

young nation can boast a more romantic history, one of more far-reaching human interest? Color, incident, tragedy and comedy, defeat and victory, joy and sorrow . . . If only we had the pen of the Greeks . . . !”

Hermann Giliomee, unfortunately,

is no Herodotus. The Boers are clearly a colorful people, marked by that combination of independence and obstinacy that Americans used to call “cussedness.” Prof. Giliomee presents a wealth of information conscientiously, but lacks a novelist’s talent to bring his characters to life or let us see through their eyes.

The author covers the two and a half centuries that end with the Boer War in 278 pages, leaving the bulk of the work—nearly 400 pages—for the last century. By 1910, the defeated Boer republics were integrated with the Cape Colony and Natal to form the Union of South Africa, with the borders it has retained to this day.

Although whites made up only about a fifth of the population, native resistance at first seemed less of a threat to civilization than the so-called poor-white problem, which was the most pressing political issue from the early 20th century until the 1940s. Afrikaners who could no longer support themselves on farms were streaming into the cities. They were illiterate, unskilled, and unwilling to work at wages blacks accepted. The 1925 replacement of Dutch by Afrikaans as South Africa’s co-official language with English was motivated in part by the need to educate these poor whites.

The purpose of early racial legislation was to guarantee whites employment at a “decent” wage by insulating them from competition with blacks. This was justified to liberal skeptics as a temporary measure that would let whites regain their footing and eventually benefit the black majority as well. Implausible or cynical as this may sound, it is more or less what happened. By the Second World War, dire white poverty was a thing of the past, and blacks and Coloreds assumed many of the menial jobs involved in wartime production.

In later years, as the wrath of non-whites and liberals focused on “apartheid,” a legend grew up that race relations had been relatively benign and were improving before the Nationalists came to power in 1948 and began to implement their racial policies. In fact, there had long been laws governing

race relations—the British themselves introduced the pass system in the 19th century—and the wartime government of Jan Smuts laid some of the founda-



Jan Smuts on the cover of *Time*.

tions of apartheid. It introduced compulsory voter registration for whites only, built all-colored suburbs, and required employers to segregate work and eating areas. Local authorities were already calling for an official national register classifying everyone by race, but segregation remained a ramshackle system of piecemeal responses to specific situations.

Even the liberals of the time heartily disapproved of miscegenation. They wanted the indefinite continuation of *de facto* residential and social segregation, but preferred social to legal sanctions, and envisioned the eventual removal of the color bar from the South African Constitution. The leading liberal in the United Party once admitted, however, that the assumption that social pressure could take the place of laws "calls for faith in no small degree," and wondered whether "it will ensure the white man's position in South Africa" and "make South Africa safe for European civilization."

The Afrikaners of the Nationalist Party, who were painfully conscious of their weakness in numbers, were not prepared to take chances. Apartheid, or "separateness," was to be a survival plan. It was born unobtrusively in Dutch Reformed Church circles in the 1930s as a mission strategy of working toward self-supporting and independent indigenous churches.

Political apartheid was a kind of secu-

lar generalization of this policy that took shape in the years before the successful 1948 elections. Its designers looked to the American South for guidance, and studied contemporary theories about conflict prevention in plural societies. Prof. Giliomee shows that, tendentious arguments of leftist historians notwithstanding, Nazi ideology had virtually no influence on apartheid. Nationalists were, in his words, "unequivocally rejecting National Socialism as an alien import into South Africa, and endorsing parliamentary democracy."

Apartheid was based on reciprocity that was to guarantee its essential justice; whites were granting blacks everything they demanded for themselves: schools, churches, homelands and (eventually) governments, each operating in its own language. A crazy-quilt patchwork of Bantustans—reserved areas where whites were not allowed to purchase land—had been set up as early as 1913 and expanded in 1936. These areas were to be future independent homelands where the "original social order of the natives" would be re-established. The Afrikaners may have been projecting their resistance to British cultural and linguistic imperialism onto blacks, many of whom were happy to move to the cities, abandon their customs, and speak English.

The apartheid era was one of unprecedented prosperity for South Africa, and blacks shared in that prosperity. From 1960 to 1980 their average disposable personal income grew 84 percent, from Rand 1033 to 1903 (adjusted for inflation), and life expectancy rose from 38 years to over 60. The Nationalists spent more on education and medicine for blacks than previous governments.

According to the census of 1946, whites made up 21.6% of South Africa's population, and demographers expected that figure to rise to 23.2% by the end of the century. To the consternation of demographers and the government, however, the black population grew rapidly—so rapidly that the average age of black South Africans fell to below 16. The white share of the population dropped steadily, to 17 percent in 1976 and 12 percent in 2000.

Black-white economic cooperation, which apartheid was careful not to interfere with, benefited both races, but by employing blacks in unpleasant jobs, whites were sowing dragons' teeth. As the number of blacks increased, whites

grew dependent on them. The Afrikaner nation that survived the Great Trek and the concentration camps of the Boer War finally capitulated to the effects of prosperity.

Says Prof. Giliomee: "Hendrik Verwoerd [the "architect of apartheid"] always believed that, confronted with a choice between being rich and integrated, and segregated and poor, the Afrikaners would choose the latter. But the strong surge of prosperity over which he presided tilted the scale heavily in favor of the former. Whites had become accustomed to economic growth producing steadily improved social circumstances and a comfortable lifestyle."

According to one grim joke, white South Africans would rather be murdered in their own beds than make them.



Hendrik Verwoerd.

Some early apartheid theorists had envisaged an eventual "total apartheid:" an all-white state coexisting with several black states, each with its own viable economy and separate labor force. In the early 1950s, Afrikaner leaders explicitly rejected this vision, and it gradually disappeared from public discussion. Somehow, the homelands were never developed. The truth is that South African whites could not bring themselves to do without cheap black labor.

Still, it was not inevitable that the Afrikaner nation would abandon its fate to the ANC. This catastrophe was brought about by the steady demoralization of whites, their will sapped by years of being treated as "the polecat of the world." As Prof. Giliomee makes clear,

the Afrikaners were never defeated; they simply surrendered.

We may never know why the whites of South Africa—both the English and the Afrikaners—voted in a 1992 referendum to rewrite the constitution. Whites still had virtually complete control of the country, and the voters probably never expected their leaders to give up so much so quickly. As Prof. Giliomee puts it, “That [President F. W.] de Klerk and his negotiators would manage to retain so little despite a position of relative strength places a serious question mark over his leadership abilities.” This judgment is particularly thought-provoking, coming as it does, from an opponent of apartheid.

ANC-ruled South Africa is a highly centralized state with no built-in guarantees for minorities. Its current system of organized looting known as Black Economic Empowerment is giving the new ruling class a powerful taste for wealth, which in a few more years will no longer be there to loot. What will stop South Africa eventually from driving out whites and destroying its economy as Zimbabwe has done?

Afrikaner history is an inspiring story of a European people very similar to America’s founding stock. For many



Afrikaners today.

generations Afrikaners cultivated the powerful racial and tribal consciousness necessary for survival in the midst of alien and hostile races. Softened by prosperity and demoralized by the disapproval of outsiders, they ceased to believe in themselves and surrendered without firing a shot. In the decades

ahead, we other men of the West will find occasion to learn both from their virtues and from their terrible mistakes. **Q**

Dr. Devlin is a contributing editor to The Occidental Quarterly and the author of Alexandre Kojève and the Outcome of Modern Thought.

La Raza Eyes the Supreme Court

by Jared Taylor

President Obama has surprised no one by appointing a vividly race-conscious Hispanic as his first nominee to the United States Supreme Court. Some of Sonia Sotomayor’s choicer observations have been widely reported: “I would hope that a wise Latina woman with the richness of her experiences would more often than not reach a better conclusion than a white male who hasn’t lived that life.” She also says sex and race “may and will make a difference in our judging.” (These remarks appeared in a publication that is called—apparently with a straight face—the *Berkeley La Raza Law Journal*.) But what else should we expect from a member of the Puerto Rican Bar Association, the Hispanic National Bar Association, the Association of Judges of Hispanic Heritage, and the National Council of La Raza?

The way Miss Sotomayor insists we pronounce her name is another indica-

tion of how vehemently Hispanic she is. Zbigniew Brzezinski and Antonin Scalia don’t tell us to talk the way their Polish or Italian ancestors did. They are Americans, and understand the way



Americans speak. Not Sonia. It wasn’t all that long ago that people tried to fit in, and many newcomers even changed their names to become more American. Now, not even someone who wants to

sit on the Supreme Court worries about fitting in. We have to adjust to her; not the other way around.

Miss Sotomayor also appears to think her role is to rule, not to ensure that the laws are Constitutional. In another well-circulated comment she said that a “court of appeals [the level at which she now sits] is where policy is made.” No, Sonia, the legislative branch is where policy is made. It would be hard to think of a statement that so blatantly demonstrates a lack of what we used to call “judicial temperament.” This woman is a ruthless liberal, and exercises her power in an attempt to advance her politics.

Miss Sotomayor’s record shows that, like Justice Ruth Ginsberg, she is likely to give foreign legal opinions considerable deference. One European legal flourish much admired by liberals is to justify clamping down on free speech by arguing that some opinions are too loathsome to be permitted. Miss Sotomayor has not yet had a chance

to try this argument out on the First Amendment, but I suspect she would love to. If she is confirmed, she will end up like Thurgood Marshall, whose racial preoccupations and biases eventually became so simple-minded as to be almost comical.

And there is little doubt she will be confirmed. As noted above, she is on record as saying, in effect, that Hispanic women are wiser and better than white men. The spineless white men we call senators will prove her right by confirm-

ing her.

Of course, justices such as Sonia Sotomayor are what Americans, whether they knew it or not, were voting for last November, and we can count on more nominations of the same stripe: unapologetic race and sex quotas designed to turn the Supreme Court into an engine of increasingly blatant dispossession. If a majority-white court has repeatedly shown itself capable of finding that equal opportunity requires discrimination against

whites, what fanciful principles will an increasingly non-white court find in the Constitution? Mr. Obama will no doubt do his best to make sure we find out.

In the meantime, we can at least pronounce the nominee's name the way it should be pronounced: with the accent on the first syllable and the two last syllables rhyming with "mayor," as in the mayor of New York. If someone corrects you, just explain that you are doing Miss Sotomayor the undeserved favor of treating her like an American. **Q**

The BNP Goes to Strasbourg

Nationalist Right breaks through in EU elections.

by Stephen Webster

British politics changed dramatically on June 4 as British voters, sickened by the corruption of the governing Labour Party and reluctant to embrace the opposition Tories, pinned their hopes on smaller parties. Among the big winners was the British National Party (BNP), which broke through into serious politics by winning two seats in the European Parliament.

When ballots were counted three days after the vote, the first BNP victory to be announced was that of long-time nationalist activist, Andrew Brons, who won a seat in the Yorkshire and Humber region of North East England with 9.8 percent of the vote. Hours later, the British political and media establishment reacted with even greater dismay to the news that BNP leader Nick Griffin had won a second seat for the BNP in the North West region with 8 percent. It was a historic achievement. No British nationalist party had ever won a parliamentary seat of any kind, and now the BNP holds two, just as BNP candidate Tim Rait predicted in his article in last month's issue, "A Breakthrough for the BNP?" Unfortunately Mr. Rait himself was unsuccessful in his bid in South East England, where the BNP fell short with 4.4 percent of the vote.

Mr. Griffin's victory is particularly satisfying, given the media vilification he suffered during the campaign. The press did not even try to hide its bias, routinely smearing him as a "fascist" and a "racist." On election day the tabloid newspaper *Daily Sun* ran a large

bright orange banner ad that blared, "Stop Nick Griffin," with a link to an anti-BNP website run by the far-left, anti-white organization Searchlight.

On election night, a violent crowd of "anti-racist" agitators tried to prevent Mr. Griffin from attending the vote count at the Manchester town hall, surrounding his car and pelting it with eggs as they screamed "Fascist scum." He had to give up his car and ride to the town hall in a police van.

Mr. Griffin won by the thinnest margin, and it was 2 a.m. before officials were able to announce the result. When the BNP leader finally took the stage at Manchester town hall the other newly-elected Euro-MPs walked off in protest. Undeterred, Mr. Griffin told the crowd that BNP success would "transform British politics." Of his election, he said, "This is ordinary decent people . . . kicking back against racism, because racism in this country is now directed overwhelmingly against people who look like me." He added: "We're here to look after our people because no one else will. For the last 50 years, more and more of the people of Britain have watched with concern, growing dismay, and sometimes anger as an out-of-touch political elite has transformed our country before our very eyes."

The establishment politicians reacted with typical contempt for the electorate. Sir Robert Atkins, the head of the Conservative Party list in the North West (see last month's article on the BNP for how the Euro-elections are run), described the BNP as "an aberration" and called Mr. Griffin's success

a "sad day for British politics." Arlene McCarthy, who headed the Labour list, told the crowd the BNP was "a party whose members include convicted rapists." BNP supporters replied with, "Get back to the trough!" a reference to the continuing UK parliament expenses



BNP Chairman Nick Griffin.

scandal, which has undermined support for the Labour Party.

At the vote count in Yorkshire, the BNP's first Euro-MP, Mr. Brons denounced the "onslaught against us" by the media and other parties. "Despite the lies, despite the money, despite the misrepresentation, we've been able to win through," he said. The dapper and articulate Mr. Brons had been teaching politics and government at Harrogate College before reentering politics under the BNP banner.

Labour Prime Minister Gordon Brown will face further pressure to resign after the BNP breakthrough and his own party's meager showing in the Euro-elections. Says one unnamed senior party leader: "It is one thing to lose to the Tories, but actually to do so badly that we are letting in the fascists is quite another." Health Secretary Andy Burnham agreed: "It is a sad moment.

There are concerns about immigration. The Government have to get a response to those concerns. We have got to understand why people have voted for the BNP. We should redouble our determination to take them on and take them out of British politics.”

Although the results were overshadowed by the Euro-Parliament campaign, the BNP also broke through in county council elections held the same day, winning a seat each in Lancashire, Leicestershire, and Hertfordshire. In addition to these three seats, the BNP now has 55 town councilors and 50 borough and other local councilors. Mr. Griffin wants to make the BNP a mainstream political party, and these victories will go a long way towards achieving that goal. The party will now get government funding, which will help it contest future elections and make it harder for the media to dismiss the BNP as a fringe party and ignore its

positions.

Mr. Griffin and Mr. Brons are likely to play an important role in any par-



Manchester protest against Nick Griffin.

liamentary group formed by European nationalists. Nationalists did well all across Europe as support for the left collapsed on the continent as it did in Britain. In Austria, the Freedom Party won 13 percent of the vote and will send two members to the European Parliament. In Denmark, Pia Kjaersgaard’s

Danish People’s Party won 14.4 percent and will send two members. Renegade Dutch politician Geert Wilder’s Freedom Party stunned the establishment by winning 17 percent of the vote and coming in just behind the ruling Christian Democrats. In Hungary, a new party called the Movement for a Better Hungary, which campaigns on the slogan “Hungary belongs to the Hungarians,” was the third-place finisher with 15 percent of the vote.

An exception to the encouraging record was the National Front in France, which saw its percentage of the vote drop from 9.8 percent in 2004 to 6.3 percent, with the result that it is sending only three Euro-MPs to Strasbourg. Martin Schulz, leader of the European Parliament’s Socialist bloc, summed up the feelings of the left: “It’s a sad evening for social democracy in Europe. We are particularly disappointed. It’s a bitter evening for us.”⁹

O Tempora, O Mores!

Cuento del Lado Oeste

Much has changed in the 50 years since *West Side Story* debuted on Broadway. For one thing, Puerto Ricans, or “Spanish” as many called them then, are no longer exotic to New York City—one is likely to be on the Supreme Court by summer’s end. Puerto Ricans started coming to the mainland by the thousands after the Second World War, and numbered 41,000 by 1960, making up 14



percent of the population between 58th and 110th Streets on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. Today, nearly 4 million Puerto Ricans live in the United States, and fewer than 4 million live on the island itself. The Census Bureau

estimated that the number of stateside Puerto Ricans first exceeded the number back home in 2003. Most Puerto Ricans have left Manhattan; there are 787,000 living in New York City, and only 6,700 in the old *West Side Story* neighborhood. There is still a Puerto Rican Day parade down Fifth Avenue every year, and the musical remains popular for school and amateur theatrics.

A new version opened on Broadway in March and has been nominated for several Tony awards. Arthur Laurents, who wrote the book for the original play and at age 91 is directing the revival, says it needed a fresh approach. He insisted that all Puerto Rican roles go to Spanish-speaking Hispanics, and that they perform all of their parts in Spanish. Audiences therefore hear “Siento Hermosa” instead of “I Feel Pretty” and “Un Hombre Asi” instead of “A Boy Like That.” Mr. Laurents isn’t reviving *West Side Story* to appeal to Hispanics, who account for only 5.7 percent of all Broadway ticket sales. He says the Spanish “heightens emotional drama” by giving audiences “a truer sense of the cultural misunderstandings at the heart of” the play. Josefina Scaglione, the 21-year-old Argentine actress who plays Maria explains that her character “is

from Puerto Rico, so she would speak Spanish with her friends.” [Patricia Cohen, *Same City, New Story*, New York Times, March 15, 2009, p. 1.]



Ticket sales matter, though, so Miss Scaglione’s looks have more in common with Natalie Wood’s than Sonia Sotomayor’s.

‘Too Christian’

In 1969, Queen Elizabeth established an award called the Trinity Cross of the Order of Trinity, to recognize “distinguished service and gallantry” in the

former British colony of Trinidad and Tobago. Sixty-two people, including novelist V. S. Naipaul, have won the award. The islands have been independent since 1962 and severed ties to the monarchy in 1976, but chose to retain the British Privy Council as their final court of appeals.

Trinidad and Tobago have a population of 1.3 million; 80 percent are either of African or Indian descent, and 30 percent are either Muslim or Hindu. Hindus and Muslims have long objected to the Christian symbolism of the Trinity Cross—some have refused to accept it for that reason—and in 2004 a mixed group sued to have it renamed or retired. The High Court of Trinidad ruled that the decoration discriminated against non-Christians, but noted that it did not have the power to invalidate a royal award.

The plaintiffs then appealed to the Privy Council, which in May junked the award, saying it is “perceived by Hindus and Muslims . . . as an overtly Christian symbol both in name and in substance.” The Trinidad government established a new award called the Order of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and conferred by the president.

It seems to have escaped the notice of Muslims and Hindus that Columbus named their country in recognition of the



The new medal bears no cross.

Holy Trinity. The name of Tobago also could be offensive. The cigar-shaped island’s name derives from the Spanish word for tobacco.

The British are squabbling over awards and decorations, too. In 2004, a parliamentary committee recommended reducing the number of decorations

from twelve to four, and removing references to the Cross or Christian saints. Paul Flynn, a Labour member of the committee, said, “The titles are now meaningless, they are a remnant of another age and I don’t think they have any particular Christian significance.”

In 2003, black poet Benjamin Zephaniah publicly rejected the Order of the British Empire, saying it reminded him of white supremacy. In 2008, Christine Grahame, a member of the Scottish Parliament, declared the George Medal, the highest British civilian award for bravery, as unsuitable for Scots because it is “very clearly Anglocentric.” St. George is the patron saint of England. [David Brown, *Queen’s Merit Decoration Ruled Illegal for Being Too Christian*, Times (London), May 8, 2009, p. 6.]

Justice, Obama Style

In January, the US Department of Justice (DOJ) filed a voter intimidation suit against the New Black Panther Party. Three party members showed up at a Philadelphia polling station last November, dressed like soldiers and armed with billy clubs. Footage aired on Fox News and CNN showed them menacing voters and making racial threats. DOJ lawyers argued that if it is left unpunished, the New Panther Party will “continue to violate . . . the Voting Rights Act by continuing to direct intimidation, threats and coercion at voters and potential voters . . .” On April 20, the department won a default judgment in federal court when the Panthers named in the lawsuit—Chairman Malik Zulu Shabazz, Minister King Samir Shabazz and Jerry Jackson—failed to appear.

On May 5, DOJ lawyers were working with Judge Stewart Dalzell to determine what penalties they would seek, but 10 days later they were overruled by political appointees in the department who told them to dismiss the complaints against Malik Zulu Shabazz and Mr. Jackson. They were ordered to seek a judgment against only the ringleader, King Samir Shabazz, with the laughable penalty of being forbidden to display a “weapon within 100 feet of any open polling location” until Nov. 15, 2012.

It is virtually unprecedented for the department to walk away from a default judgment. When asked why Justice reversed itself, spokesman Alejandro

Miyar refused to explain, saying only that “claims were dismissed against the other defendants based on a careful assessment of the facts and the law.” [Jerry Seper, *Career Lawyers Overruled on Voting Case*, Washington Times, May 29, 2009.]



Panthers caught on video tape.

In a separate matter, the state of Georgia wants to make sure only US citizens vote in elections so it set up a verification system to check voters’ Social Security numbers and driver’s licenses. Last fall, Hispanic voters sued, claiming discrimination, and in October, a three-judge federal panel ordered the state to seek Justice Department approval for the ID checks under the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Georgia is one of several states that need federal permission before changing election rules because of a “history of discriminatory, Jim Crow-era voting practices.”

At the end of May, the department ruled that verification had a “discriminatory effect” against non-white voters and must stop. “This flawed system frequently subjects a disproportionate number of African-American, Asian and/or Hispanic voters to additional, and more importantly, erroneous burdens on the right to register to vote,” a DOJ official wrote, claiming that Justice found more than 7,000 cases in which the system mistakenly flagged an eligible voter as an illegal. (According to the Georgia Secretary of State, there are 5,588,218 registered voters. Assuming Justice got the numbers right, that means the system is 99.9987 percent accurate.)

Secretary of State Karen Handel, a Republican who is running for governor next year, complained that “clearly, politics took priority over common sense and good public policy.” She says 2,100 people who attempted to register to vote last year still have “unresolved questions” about their citizenship, and

that her inspector general is investigating more than 30 cases of non-citizens casting ballots in Georgia elections.

The US Supreme Court is considering a challenge to the portion of the Voting Rights Act that requires Georgia and a few other states to seek federal approval before they can change election laws. [Shannon McCaffrey, *Feds Spike Voter Citizenship Checks in Georgia*, AP, June 1, 2009.]

Persistent Gap

More than seven years have passed since No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), President Bush's much ballyhooed effort to close the racial achievement gap, went into effect (see "Fantasy and Fraud: No Child Left Behind, AR, Feb. 2004). There is little to show for the \$100 billion NCLB has cost taxpayers. Blacks and Hispanics are getting better scores on standardized tests, but so are whites, and while the gap has narrowed slightly since the 1970s, it remains wide. The US Department of Education says it is roughly equivalent to between two and three school years' worth of learning, meaning that blacks in their senior year test at about the level of whites at the beginning of their sophomore years. "There's not much indication that NCLB is causing the kind of change we were all hoping for," says G. Gage Kingsbury, a testing expert who is a director at the Northwest Evaluation Association in Portland.

Freeman A. Hrabowski III, president of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, believes schools need to do more for black students at an early age. "Where there are programs that encourage that additional work, students of color do the work and their performance improves and the gap narrows," he says. [Sam Dillon, "No Child" Law Is Not Closing a Racial Gap, *New York Times*, April 28, 2009, p. A1] If whites got the same attention, the gap might widen.

Not So Tragic Anymore

According to the latest Census Bureau estimates, there are now 5.2 million multiracial Americans. Since 2000 their number has risen 33 percent and they are now 3.4 percent of the population. Demographers say celebrities like Tiger Woods and Barack Obama are making multiracialism more acceptable. By percentages, Hawaii has the most mul-

tiracial people with close to 20 percent, followed by Alaska and Oklahoma, both with about 4 percent.

"Multiracial unions have been happening for a very long time, but we are only now really coming to terms with saying it's OK," says Carolyn Liebler,



Tiger Woods with son Charlie.

a sociology professor at the University of Minnesota. She thinks many more simply have not classified themselves accurately. "Millions are yet to come out," she says.

Kayci Baldwin, 17, of Middletown, New Jersey, says she remembers how her black father and white mother worried whether she would fit in. While she at first struggled with her identity, Baldwin now embraces it, sponsoring support groups and a nationwide multiracial teen club with 1,000 members. "I went to my high school prom last week with my date who is Ecuadoran-Nigerian, a friend who is Chinese-white and another friend who is part Dominican," she explains. "While we are a group that was previously ignored in many ways, we now have an opportunity to fully identify and express ourselves."

About one in 13 marriages are mixed race, with the most common being white-Hispanic, white-American Indian and white-Asian. More than half of the multiracial population is younger than 20 years old. [Multiracial America is Fastest Growing Group, AP, May 28, 2009.]

White Baby Boom?

It used to be said that there were more dogs than children in San Francisco, but the city is now seeing its biggest increase in the number of births since the early 1970s. More than 9,000 babies

were born in San Francisco in 2007, the most since 1994, and the number of children under age five has increased 24 percent since 2000. Three fourths of the increase is among whites. San Francisco Supervisor Bevan Dufty, a homosexual man raising his 2-1/2-year-old daughter with a lesbian partner, says, "There has been a demographic boom in the gay community having kids," but the trend isn't just among homosexuals, nor is it limited to the Bay Area.

White families are fueling increases in the child population in several cities that were worried about dwindling numbers. "I think there is a new generation of white, well-off parents who want to stay in the city, in high-amenity cities like San Francisco, New York, Washington, D.C., and Portland," says William Frey, a demographer with the Brookings Institution. "They are willing to pay for private schools and child-safe neighborhoods in order to do this. It's a trend that wasn't apparent for the baby boomers, who left for the suburbs when they started having kids." However, he adds, "This is not a trend that's going to sweep the country. It's going to sweep pockets of wealth and privilege and



upper middle-class lifestyles." [Mike Swift, *San Francisco Sees Baby Boom*, *Mercury News* (San Jose), May 24, 2009.]

21 Children, 11 Mothers, 1 Father

Desmond Hatchett is a busy man. The 29-year-old minimum-wage worker from Knoxville, Tennessee, is father of at least 21 children, ranging from newborn to 11-years-old, with at least 11 different women. In May, Mr. Hatchett appeared in Juvenile Child Support Court to explain why he hasn't paid what he owes to the mothers of 15 of

his children. The women are supposed to get anywhere from \$25 to \$309 a month, but when his garnished paycheck is divvied up, some women only get \$1.98 a month. He managed to bring \$400 to court, which was split among the mothers, but he faces jail time if he can't pay more. The court cannot keep Mr. Hatchett behind bars forever, which means he will probably sire even more children for which the taxpayers of Tennessee will provide. [Cris Mullen, *Man Has 21 Children with 11 Mothers*, WTSP-TV (Tampa Bay), May 23, 2009.]

Kiss Off

Carolyn Forword is a 22-year-old South African actress who used to be in a production of *The Pied Piper of Hamelin* with the Riverside Theatre Company, based in Cape Town. There are one black and three white actors in a play that is intended to promote racial harmony to South African children. The script calls for Miss Forward's character to kiss the character played by the black actor, 28-year-old Unathi Dyantyi. She didn't like kissing him and left the production after 12 performances.



Mr. Dyanti is angry. "She said she found it unnecessary and the kiss was unhygienic," he says. He also thinks he knows why she didn't want to kiss him: "There is still racism in South African theater today, but it's very subtle."

"It is a play for eight-year-olds," counters Miss Forward. "They wanted me to kiss the guy for 20 seconds, which is inappropriate for that audience. It wouldn't have gone down well at a Catholic school, for example. It would have been unhygienic because it was a traveling show. I pulled out because the director never gave my agent an idea of where we were staying. It had nothing to do with the kissing thing. But now I'm seen as a racist."

The play's director, Leslie Ehrhardt, supports Mr. Dyantyi. "Without a doubt

there was a racial element from the word go until the very end," he says. "Carolyn underlined it with her general behavior towards Unathi. She pushed him away and her face was screwed up, as if kissing him was the worst thing in the world." He sees a larger tragedy: "It undermines what people did here in the 60s, 70s and 80s in using theatre to challenge apartheid." [David Smith, *White Actor's Refusal to Kiss Black Man Turns Into a Race Row in South Africa*, *Guardian* (London), May 28, 2009.]

Not Guilty After All

When Brandon McClelland's mangled body was found by police in Paris, Texas last September, authorities feared they had another James Byrd case on their hands. James Byrd was the black man who was chained to a pickup truck and dragged to death by three whites in Jasper, Texas in 1998. The Byrd death was frequently cited as evidence of the need for state and national "hate" crime laws and was an issue during the 2000 presidential campaign.

Forensics tests determined that McClelland's body was caught under a truck and that he was dragged at least 70 feet. Police arrested two white men, Shannon Finley and Charles Crostley, friend's of McClelland's who were drinking with him the day he died. Prosecutors contended that Mr. Finley and Mr. Crostley deliberately ran over McClelland, who was black, after a drunken argument. The case garnered national attention (the men were presumed guilty by the media), and brought out protesters from the Nation of Islam, the New Black Panther Party, and one lonely counter-demonstrator from the Ku Klux Klan.

Mr. Finley and Mr. Crostley always said they were innocent, and over the last few months the case against them has unraveled. They told police that they argued over whether Mr. Finley was too drunk to drive, and McClelland got out of the car to walk home. Investigators could find none of McClelland's DNA on Mr. Finley's pickup. In May, the driver of a gravel truck gave a sworn statement acknowledging he might have accidentally run over McClelland, and in June, prosecutors dropped the charges. "I think it's very simple," says David Turner, Mr. Crostley's lawyer. "These fellows didn't do it."

Mr. Finley and Mr. Crostley were released from jail on June 4. They had been behind bars since they were arrested last September, since they were unable to post bond. [Charges Dropped in Black Man's Dragging Death, AP, June 4, 2009.] Their release has attracted little attention. Had blacks been finally let out of jail after being found innocent of racially-charged accusations there would have been much soul-searching about a primitive Texan justice system that had falsely accused innocent blacks.

Uncharming City

Baltimore used to call itself "Charm City," but these days the name rings hollow. Gangs of black thugs are roaming the Inner Harbor and downtown tourist areas, fighting each other and attacking tourists. Most of the victims are white, and the attacks seem to be pure sport rather than robbery. The usual pattern is that whites are attacked from behind without warning by groups that may include young women as well as men.

No one has been killed in the recent incidents, but a May 24 attack was a near miss. A gang of blacks jumped off-duty policeman George Williams, who was visiting Baltimore from his home in Brick Township, New Jersey, with his girlfriend, Marisa Parish. Mr. Williams says four black men and three women attacked them as they walked along a downtown street. One thug pulled a knife and put it to Miss Parish's face while a woman held her from behind. The men started punching and kicking Mr. Williams, and threw him to the ground. "They were using my head for a soccer ball—back and forth, back and forth," he explains, and some were shouting "you're dead." Miss Parish managed to break away and shield Mr. Williams's head from further kicks. She was knocked out but probably saved his life. Ironically, Mr. Williams's hometown, Brick Township, was voted America's Safest City in 2006.

Baltimore police say that even with this rash of attacks, downtown and the Inner Harbor are the safest places in the city, at least during the day. They have increased the number of officers patrolling the waterfront at night from 12 to 40, and have also stepped up foot patrols in other areas. [Justin Fenton, *Assaults on Rise in Downtown, Inner Harbor*, *Baltimore Sun*, May 31, 2009.] 